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Educational Writings

I. REVIEWS AND BOOK NOTES

*Lipps' Daily Lesson Plan Book for Vocational Instructors.*¹—The vocational instructor looking for a convenient guide for the analysis of his lesson problems should find this book helpful. The sheets are planned in blank form so that the instructor may record under the proper headings the date, the subject, and the subdivision of the subject which is being taken care of by the lesson assignment, the purpose of the lesson, the grouping of subject-matter with methods of presentation, and the reference readings on the subject-matter. In all, space is provided for the planning of 222 lessons. Several type or sample plans are worked out in detail for lessons in the household arts, agriculture, and farm mechanics.

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*Teaching by Projects.*²—The foregoing is the title of another late book on the subject of project teaching. There is set forth in the book an earnest and able plea for the reorganization of the subject-matter in our school curricula. The author quite correctly shows that our tendency is now and has been for a long time to present the material in the several subjects in a loose, hodge-podge, encyclopedic fashion, and that this procedure can lead only to waste and inefficient results. His suggested remedy lies in organizing the subject-matter around large, meaningful topics or large units of study. One feels on reading the book that the author has made his case quite clear, but there is also the feeling that such a treatment of subject-matter is not necessarily "project teaching" and that there is something more necessary to remedy the evils of school-teaching than a logical organization of the subject-matter and a thorough mastery of the same by the teacher. The psychological arrangement according to the way a child learns a subject should be as important a factor in the organization of subject-matter as the nature of the subject itself.

In discussing project teaching, much depends upon the definition of project. In this text we find the term used synonymously with "large units of study." Although the author recognizes that project may mean an activity on the part of the child which he undertakes "at his own behest when he is pressed by a felt

¹ OSCAR H. LIPPS, *Daily Lesson Plan Book for Vocational Instructors*. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Bruce Publishing Co., 1919. Pp. 65. \$0.80.

² CHARLES A. McMURRY, *Teaching by Projects*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1920. Pp. vii+257. \$1.32.

desire or need," yet he nowhere suggests or admits that this is the fundamental characteristic of project teaching. In fact he does show clearly that the term means to him no more and no less than what he has formerly set before the teachers of our country under the caption "Type Studies and Lesson Plans." Worthy and helpful as these are, they do not mean the same as "project," for the foremost thought of today implies that the child learns best by his own mental responses, reactions, and behavior. This means that the child to a very large degree must do most of the acting himself. It means that he must use his bodily activities as well as his mental activities to solve his problems and do his thinking. The reflex of such behavior upon mental growth is greater than we have been able to estimate as yet. At no point in this text do we find anything to lead one to teach in any different style than that where the pupil is assigned so much to read and study, and then expected to come to class where he will be questioned on how much he has been able to remember. This is not project teaching in the latest and best sense of the term. Projects may be mental, most assuredly, but teaching that holds the child in his seat and appeals to his mind alone and never calls upon him to do something with his hands, or body, or go out and investigate something for himself, will inevitably fall into the old-time rut of memoriter work.

Therefore, while we recognize that there is a vast deal of good material in this book, yet we feel that it is beside the point so far as project teaching is concerned in that the main issue set forth by the author is that of organization of subject-matter around large units of study and not how pupils can be kept busy doing things because they want to. It seems to us that the importance which the author has attached to "Type Studies" has impelled him to take his old "Type Studies" wine and pour it into the new "Project Study" bottle, and we are not assured that he has recognized the importance in education of the doctrine of self-activity. We feel that the reader of this book will tend to magnify logical organization of subject-matter and overlook the importance of the psychological organization, that he will be led to memoriter teaching instead of allowing the child to do a great deal of acting on his own accord, and that he will be influenced to make the child master the organization as laid down instead of allowing the pupil to think his own way through the problem placed before him.

Teaching home economics.—Under the title, *Teaching Home Economics*,¹ the authors have presented the first book upon methods in that subject. Part I, eighty pages in length, is devoted to a long discussion of the economic and social status of women and includes a sketch of the history of the home-economics movement. Part II deals with the various schemes of organization of courses of study; forty pages are given over to the different forms of organization in elementary schools, twice as much space to suggestions for various types of high schools, and an equal amount to rural schools and social units. The suggestions for lesson plans given in Part III are of value to the inexperienced student and to the teacher who has neglected new educational theory. The authors, however,

¹ ANNA M. COOLEY and others, *Teaching Home Economics*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1919. Pp. xii+555. \$1.80.